Adobe Illustrator

2025 Release

Classroom in a Book®

The official training workbook from Adobe

Brian Wood

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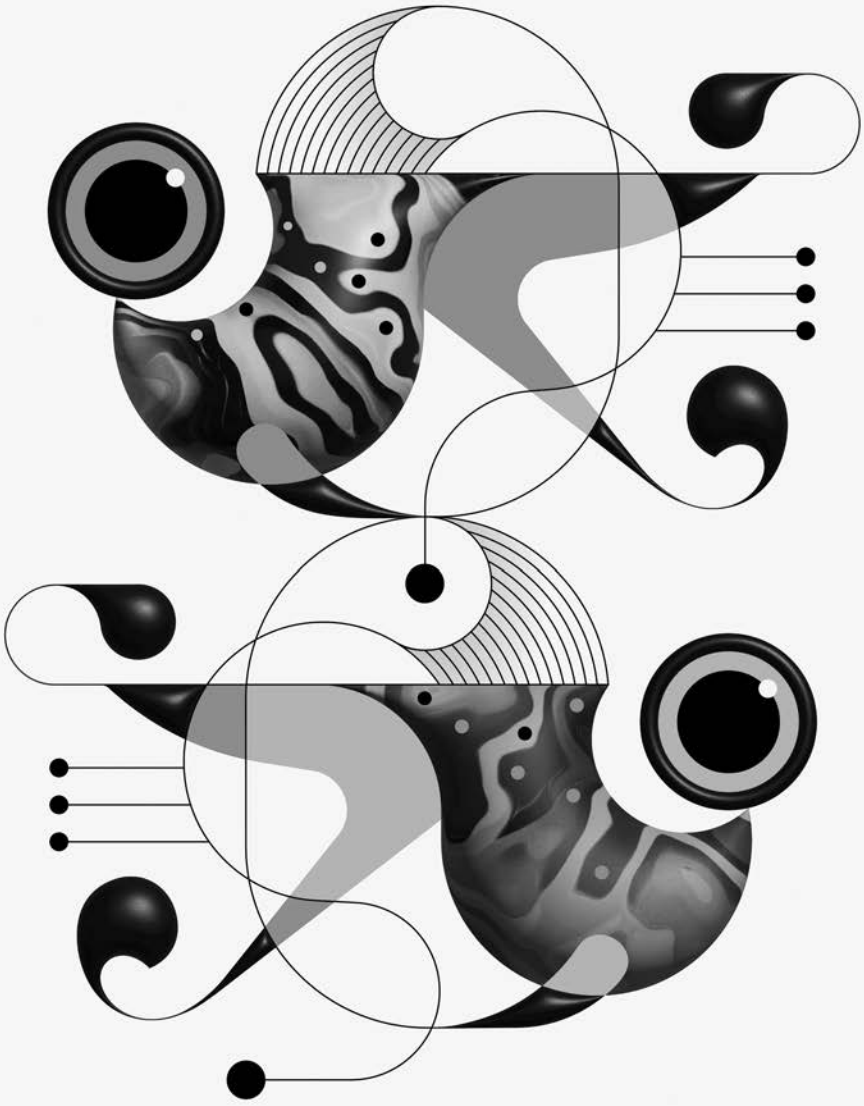

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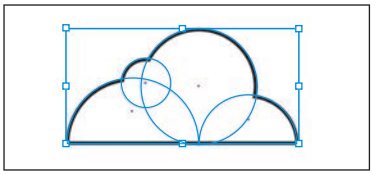
3 Press the Option (macOS) or Alt (Windows) key, and click the Unite button ( ) in the Properties panel.

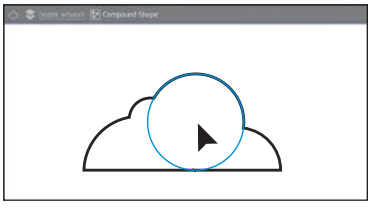


This creates a compound shape that traces the outline of what's left after the shapes are combined. You'll still be able to edit the original shapes separately.

4 Choose Select > Deselect to see the final shape.

Tip: To edit the original shapes in a compound shape like this one, you can also select them individually with the Direct Selection tool ( ).

5 With the Selection tool, double-click within the cloud to enter Isolation mode.

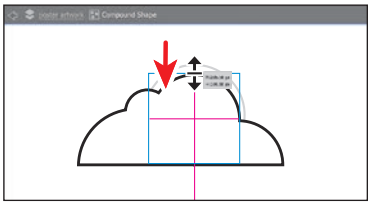


As when a regular group is in Isolation mode, the parts of the compound shape are temporarily ungrouped!

6 Click in the larger ellipse to select it.

Note: Be careful! If the ellipse moves up, for instance, it may cause the outline to do some odd things.

7 Make the shape smaller by Shift-dragging the bounding point on the top.



Notice that the outline around the cloud changes.

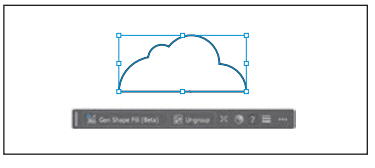
8 Press the Escape key to exit Isolation mode.

You will now expand the artwork appearance. Expanding the appearance of a compound shape maintains the shape, but you can no longer select or edit the original shapes. You will typically expand an object when you want to modify the appearance attributes and other properties of the entire shape.

9 Click away from the cloud to deselect it, and then click to select it again.

That way, the entire object is selected, and not just the one shape.

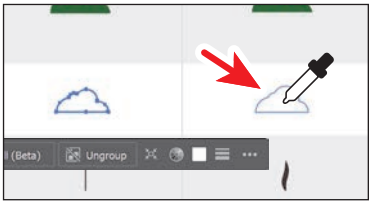
10 Choose Object > Expand Appearance.



The Pathfinder effect is now *permanent,* and the shapes are a single shape.

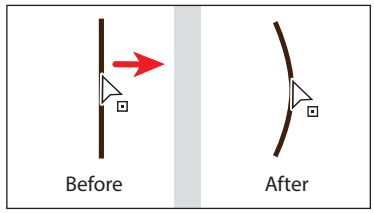
11 Choose View > Fit Artboard In Window.

12 Select the Eyedropper tool ( ) in the toolbar. With the cloud selected, click the cloud to the right in the Final Example column to sample the color and apply it to your cloud.

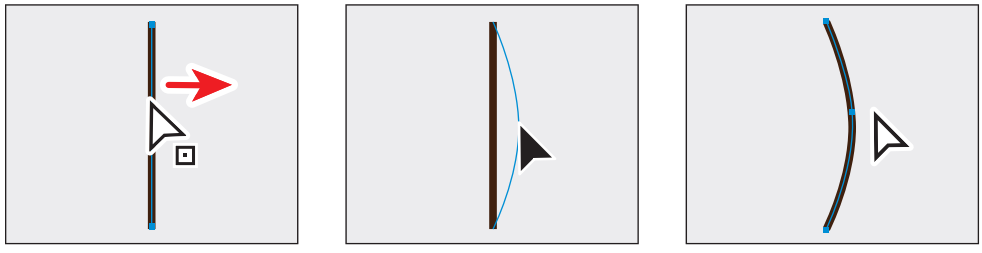


Reshaping a path

Using the Reshape tool, you can stretch parts of a path without distorting its overall shape. In this section, you'll change the shape of a line, giving it a bit of curve, so you can add a tail to the dog.

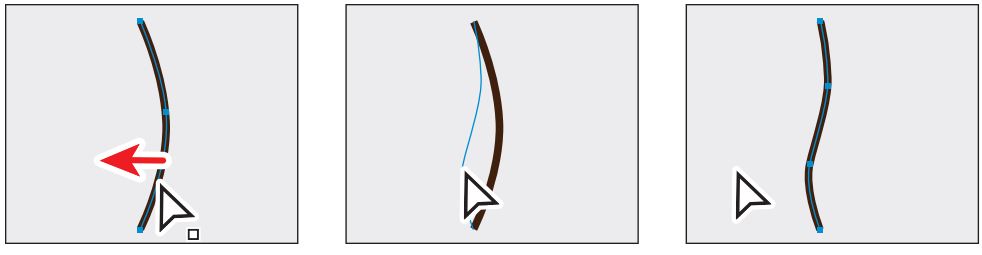


1. Make sure the Smart Guides are on (View > Smart Guides).
2. With the Selection tool (▶) selected, select the vertical line at the bottom of the artboard in the "Tail" Work Area section.
3. To make it easier to see, press Command and + (macOS) or Ctrl and + (Windows) several times to zoom in.
4. In the toolbar, press and hold on the Scale tool (⧉) and select the Reshape tool (⌇).
5. Move the pointer over the middle of the path. When the pointer changes (⌇), drag to the right to add an anchor point and reshape the path.



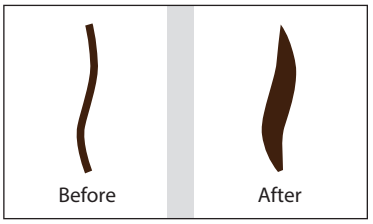
The Reshape tool can be used to drag an existing anchor point or path segment. If you drag from an existing path segment, an anchor point is created.

6. Move the pointer over the bottom third of the path, and drag it to the left a little. Leave the path selected.



Note: Only selected anchor points are adjusted when dragging with the Reshape tool.

Using the Width tool

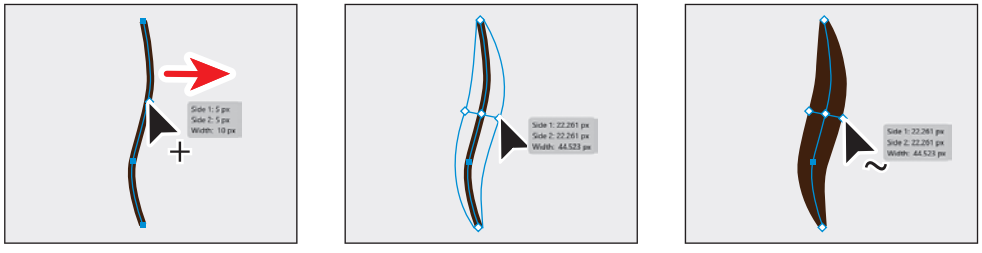


Not only can you adjust the weight of a stroke, as you did in Lesson 3, but you can alter regular stroke widths either by using the Width tool ( ) or by applying width profiles to the stroke.

This allows you to create a variable width along the stroke of a path. Next, you will use the Width tool to adjust the path you just reshaped to finalize the tail.

1 Select the Width tool ( ) in the toolbar.

2 Move the pointer over the middle of the path you just reshaped, and notice that the pointer has a plus symbol next to it ( ) when it's positioned over the path. Drag away from the line, to the right. Notice that, as you drag, you are stretching the stroke to the left and right equally. Release the mouse button when the measurement label shows a Width of approximately 44 pixels.

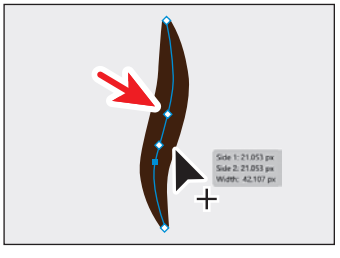


You just created a variable stroke on a path, not a shape with a fill. The point on the path is called a *width point*. The lines extending from the width point are the *handles*.

Tip: If you select a width point by clicking it, you can press Delete to remove it. When there is only one width point on a stroke, removing that point removes the width adjustment completely.

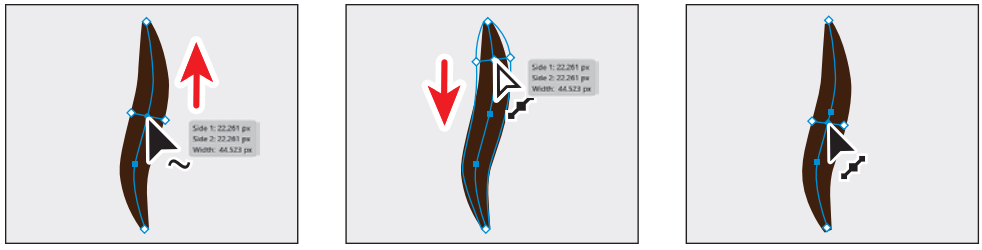
3 Click in an empty area of the artboard to deselect the point.

4 Move the pointer anywhere over the path. You should see the width point you just created (an arrow is pointing to it). It will show as a white diamond.



You may see more anchor points on your path than are shown in the figure—that's OK.

5 Move the pointer over the width point you just created, and when you see lines extending from it and the pointer changes ( ), drag it up and down to see the effect on the path. See the last part of the following figure for where it should approximately land.



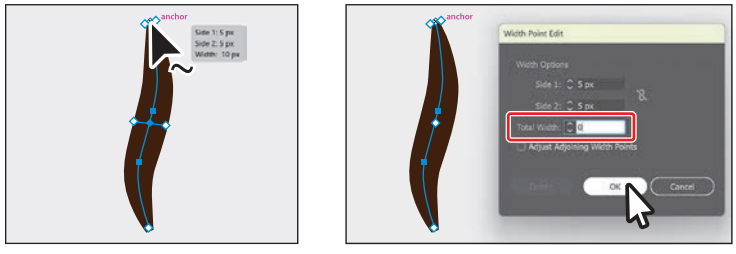
In addition to dragging to reposition a width point, you can double-click and enter values in a dialog box. That's what you'll do next.

6 Move the pointer over the top anchor point of the path.

Notice that the pointer has a wavy line next to it (↖~) and the word "anchor" appears (see the first part of the following figure).

7 Double-click the point to create a new width point and to open the Width Point Edit dialog box.

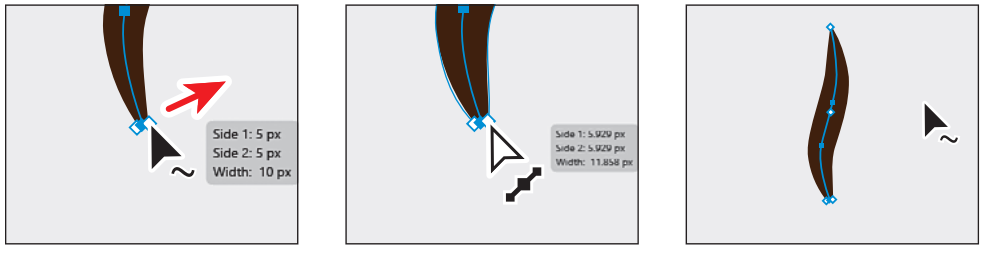
8 In the Width Point Edit dialog box, change Total Width to **0 in**, and click OK.



The Width Point Edit dialog box allows you to adjust the length of the width point handles, together or separately, with more precision.

For the next step, you may want to zoom in further.

9 Move the pointer over the handle on either side of the bottom anchor point of the path. Drag so that the width is roughly 12 pixels.



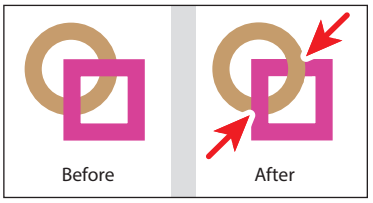
You could also have double-clicked the anchor point at the bottom to set the total width to 12 pixels in the Width Point Edit dialog box, like you did in the previous step.

Tip: You can select a width point and Option-drag (macOS) or Alt-drag (Windows) one of the width point handles to change one side of the stroke width.

Tip: After defining the stroke width, you can save the variable width as a *profile* that you can reuse later from the Stroke panel or the Control panel.

Using Intertwine

A time-saving feature in Illustrator is Intertwine. With Intertwine, you can take a path like you see in the figure and make part of it appear on top of another object or behind that same object. This can give the appearance of the path "intertwining" around the other object.



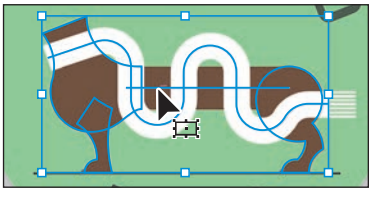
In this section, you will intertwine a scarf on the dog so it looks like it goes behind and in front of the body of the dog.

1. Choose 2 Signage from the Artboard Navigation menu in the lower-left corner of the Document window.
2. With the Selection tool selected, click the white serpentine shape (the scarf) on the dog's body.
3. Choose View > Zoom In several times to see it better.

   The white scarf would look good if it appeared to wrap around the dog—going behind and in front of the body of the dog. You can do that manually using the Scissors tool to cut the white scarf path and send paths behind, but using Intertwine is much easier.

4. Shift-click the body of the dog to add it to the selection.

   Currently, you need to have more than one object selected for this to work.

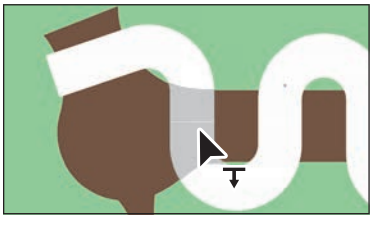


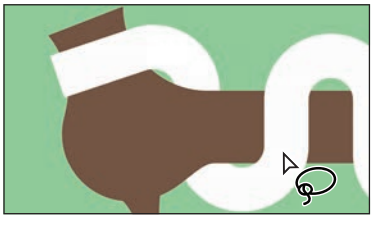
5. Choose Object > Intertwine > Make.

   The scarf and dog are now a grouped Intertwine object. If you look at the top of the Properties panel, you'll see "Intertwine."

   Now that the objects are an Intertwine object, you can tell Illustrator what parts of the white scarf, in this case, should go behind the dog body. To tell Illustrator which parts, you can click or drag a selection around them.

6. Move the pointer over the white scarf where it passes over the dog. See the first part of the following figure. When that part of the scarf highlights, click. The scarf in that small area will be behind the dog!

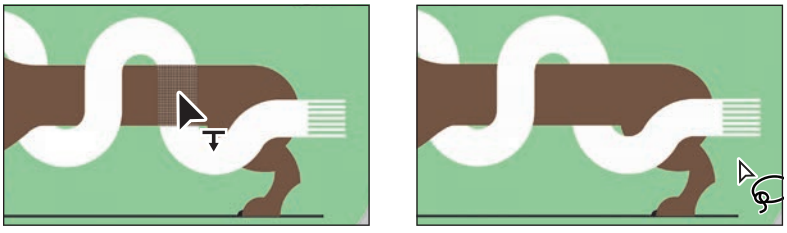




Tip: You can also drag around the white scarf where it overlaps the dog body to send it behind or bring it to front. This could be useful if, for example, you wanted to send multiple areas of the scarf behind at once.

If you were to click in the same area, it would bring the white scarf back on top of the body of the dog.

7 Click another part of the white scarf where it overlaps the dog to send that part behind.



8 When finished, choose Select > Deselect.

9 With the Selection tool, click the white scarf to select the Intertwine object again.

If you wanted to continue telling Illustrator what parts of the scarf to bring in front, or reverse parts you already did, you could click the Edit button in the Quick Actions section of the Properties panel and make more selections.

Assembling the sign

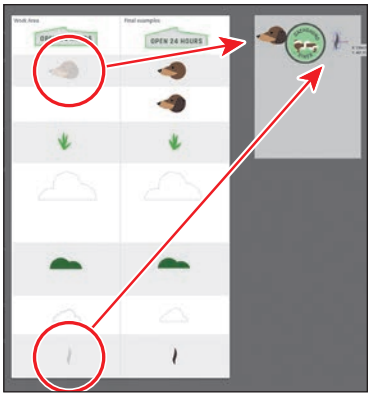
To complete the sign, you'll drag and position the dog's head and the tail onto the sign, resize them, and reposition them. You'll need to zoom in and out a fair amount to move and resize things.

1 Choose View > Fit All In Window.

2 With the Selection tool (▶) selected, drag the dog's head you worked on onto the body of the dog in the middle artboard.

3 Drag the tail of the dog from the bottom of the leftmost artboard onto the sign as well.

4 Choose View > Zoom In a few times to zoom in to the dog.



5 Resize the head by Shift-dragging a corner to make it smaller, and then drag it into place on the body of the dog.